

### The Situation in Spain.

The Spanish Cortes have met. The President of the Ministry, Marshal Serrano, opened the meeting with a speech full of hope and encouragement in view of a permanent government to Spain on liberal principles, including the island of Cuba. He anticipated the establishment of freedom of speech, the press and religion and the abolition of slavery, and the extrication of the State from its financial embarrassments. He had full faith in the consummation of the great objects of Spain's decisive and comparatively bloodless revolution.

We hope that these pleasing anticipations will be fully realized, but the trouble which has broken out in the Basque provinces does not convince us that the situation in Spain has become simple and easy of settlement. It seems rather to encourage the idea that the crisis has arrived with the assembling of the Cortes. Spain is unquestionably in a very critical condition. We do not say dangerous, because we do not think so. It is perfectly manifest that the provisional government know what they want. It is nearly as manifest that the provisional government are going to be allowed to settle matters according to their wishes. Dom Ferdinand, the father of the King of Portugal, a man who, during the minority of the King, governed Portugal wisely and well for several years, seems to be the favorite candidate. It will be well if Spain continues of this way of thinking. Dom Ferdinand will make a good king. He is a member of the house of Coburg, which, for governing power—partly through himself, partly through Prince Albert of England, but mainly through King Leopold of Belgium—has acquired rather an enviable reputation. In difficult circumstances in foreign countries they have, one and all, behaved well. Spaniards see that Dom Ferdinand will not only serve a present purpose by proving himself a good constitutional sovereign, but that he will bring with him a legacy of incalculable

value to the country. They see that he will give unity to the peninsula, and that henceforward Spaniards and Portuguese will not only be friends, but brothers. The peninsula ought to be a unit. There is no longer any good reason why it should not. If Spaniards resolve that by this means it shall be a unit Napoleon will have no good reason to hinder the result. Dom Ferdinand on the Spanish throne will be just as reasonable a neighbor as the son of Victor Emanuel could be expected to be. Much as we believe Napoleon is watching the progress of events, we are unwilling to think that he will in any way thwart the honest wishes of the Spanish people. In spite, therefore, of the fever of the Church and the nervous excitement of the Carlists, we are in good hope that Spain will work herself out of all this trouble in a manner which will compel the admiration of the world. We can see no good in the triumph of Montpensier. He is only a small edition of Louis Philippe. But we can discover much good in the triumph of Prince Ferdinand. It rests with Spain to do the wise thing. We must wait to see whether she will do it.